(c) the names of tourist spots, State-wise which enjoy foreign assistance in development of tourist spot?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) No foreign assistance has been provided through Deptt. of Tourism, Government of India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund, Japan has extended soft loan assistance for infrastructure development along identified Buddhist circuit in U.P. & Bihar and Conservation and Tourism Development Project, Ajanta & Ellora in Maharashtra.

The places covered in U.P. include Sarnath, Kushinagar Piprahwa and Sravasti and the places covered in Bihar are Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Rajgir and Vaishali.

The World Tourism Organisation and United Nations Development Programme have extended assistance for developing a Strategy for Environmentally Sustainable Tourism in Andamans.

Direct Flights between Mangalore and some Middle-East Countries

832. SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken a decision to operate direct flight between Mangalore and some of the countries in the Middle-East; and

(b) since when the flight operations will commence?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) Measures are being taken to set up Customs and Immigration facilities at Mangalore Airport for direct international services to Middle-East countries. No definite time frame can be indicated at this stage for commencement of actual operations.

By-pass at Namakkal, Tamil Nadu

833. SHRI K. KANDASAMY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to lay a Bypass Road at Namakkal Municipal Town with the coordination of Tamil Nadu Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated expenditure envisaged for the work;

(d) whether any land/engineering survey was made in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The construction of Namakkal Bypass could not be taken up due to budgetory constraints of this Ministry. However, it is being taken up on B.O.T. (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis.

(c) to (e) The land acquisition for this purpose is in advanced stage of completion.

Plight of an Athlete

834. SHRI THOMAS HANSDA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware about the plight of a Junior National Champion of Bihar who won the Gold Medal at the Junior National Athletic Championship held at Tamil Nadu in December, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the stipend being given to him for the past six months has been stopped;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Union Government propose to take steps for his proper diet and financial help who is being coached for the forthcoming Junior Asian Athletic Championship; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN) : (a) to (e) The required information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Opening of Gas Agency

835. DR. SAHEBRAO SUKRAM BAGUL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal for opening of gas agency in Tribal area, Dhulia district of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) to (c) The issue of opening LPG distributorships in Dhulia district of Maharashtra will be taken up in the new LPG marketing Plan which is presently under formulation.

[Translation]

Indira Gandhi National Art Centre

836. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the annual report and annual accounts of Indira Gandhi National Art Centre are laid on the Table of the House; and

(b) if not, the action proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for Art was formed as an autonomous Trust by the Trustees themselves as authorised by the Government by its resolution dated 19.3.1987. The Deed of Declaration of the Trust does not contain any provision for laying of the annual report and annual accounts of the Trust on the Table of the House. However, the Centre submits its annual report as well as the annual accounts to the Government.

[English]

Irrigation Development Programme in A.P

837. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have allocated Rs. 500 crores to Andhra Pradesh for irrigation development programmes;

(b) if so, whether any concrete programme has been prepared by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for utilisation of the Central assistance; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

SC/ST Vacancies

838. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the designation-wise number of appointments made in his Ministry during the last three years as on date;

(b) the designation-wise number of posts filled by the candidates belonging to SCs/STs;

(c) whether some reserved posts are lying vacant in various departments under his Ministry;

(d) if so, the designation-wise details thereof;

(e) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to fill up the reserved vacant posts; and

(f) the time by which the vacant reserved posts are likely to be filled and the reasons for the delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) The designation-wise appointments made in the Ministry during the last three years (July 94-July 97) as on date are as under:

(1)	Deputy Secretary	1
(2)	Under Secretary	3
(3)	Section Officer	4
(4)	Hindi Officer	1
(5)	Personal Assistant	1
(6)	Assistants	2
(7)	Hindi Translator Grade-I	1
(8)	UDC	2
(9)	Stenographer	2
(10)	L.D.C.	8
(11)	Staff Car Driver Gd. I	1
(12)	Staff Car Driver Gd. II	2
(13)	Staff Car Driver	1
(14)	Despatch Rider	1
(15)	Jamadar	1
(16)	Peon	7